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4 March 1999

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 62
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 3 March 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 3 March 1999, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plûmer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volkan VURAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06060 (E) 050399

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ANNEX

Letter dated 3 March 1999 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 19 February 1999 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, which contains false allegations regarding cultural property in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (A/53/836-S/1999/178).

Previous allegations concerning the cultural heritage of Northern Cyprus have been amply dealt with in our previous communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 16 October 1998 (A/53/519-S/1998/973). Suffice it to say that it has been the Greek Cypriot side, with the support of Greece, that has systematically tried to eradicate the Turkish-Muslim heritage of Cyprus, in particular during the ethnic cleansing campaign directed against the Turkish Cypriot people between 1963 and 1974. A list of 103 mosques and Islamic holy sites destroyed or damaged during this period was circulated as an appendix to the said letter.

The Greek Cypriot administration, which tries to present itself as the champion of conservation of cultural heritage, continues, on the one hand, to show utter contempt for what is left of the Turkish-Islamic heritage in South Cyprus, where Ottoman Turkish shrines are under threat of disintegration due to total neglect, and, on the other hand, systematically blocks the flow of any external financial or technical assistance to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for conservation purposes.

The policy of the Government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is to protect the cultural heritage of Northern Cyprus irrespective of its religious and cultural origins. The relevant competent authority in Northern Cyprus, namely the Department of Antiquities, works diligently to realize its objectives with available resources. Within this context, the preservation of cultural and historical sites through reuse is carried out in accordance with international instruments governing the preservation of cultural heritage.

In view of the foregoing, it is clear that the allegations of the Greek Cypriot side concerning cultural heritage have no basis and are aimed at portraying Cyprus as a Hellenic island with an exclusively Christian background. No amount of propaganda and rhetoric can change the reality that the Turkish Cypriots are sovereign equals and co-owners of Cyprus and that the island has a rich Turkish-Islamic heritage owing to centuries-long Turkish rule. Until such time as the Greek Cypriot side accepts this reality and engages in a dialogue on the basis of the existence of two sovereign States, there can be no prospects for reconciliation between the two peoples and an eventual partnership settlement.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

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4 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

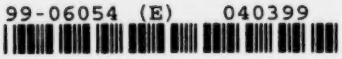
LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government and with reference to the letter dated 20 January 1999 (S/1999/64) from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note verbale dated 2 March 1999 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran, in which the assertions of the Government of the United Arab Emirates on the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa islands have been categorically rejected.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mehdi DANESH-YAZDI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

99-06054 (E) 040399



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Annex

Note verbale dated 2 March 1999 from the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran, and with reference to the note verbale dated 12 February 1999 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi, has the honour to state that the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the content of the above-mentioned note verbale as interference in its internal affairs and categorically rejects the notion and contents therein.

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LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the final communiqué adopted by the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its twenty-third special session, which was held in Abu Dhabi on 4 March 1999.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad J. SAMHAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06066 (E) 050399 050399

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Annex

Final communiqué adopted by the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its twenty-third special session, held in Abu Dhabi on 4 March 1999

The Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) held its twenty-third special session on 4 March 1999 in Abu Dhabi under the chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Rashid Bin Abdullah al-Nuaimi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates and current Chairman of the Ministerial Council. The meeting was attended by:

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates;

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain;

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia;

His Excellency Mr. Yousef Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs of Oman;

His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar; and

His Excellency Mr. Abdul Aziz Dakhil Al-Dakhil, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs of Kuwait.

His Excellency Mr. Jamil Ibrahim al-Hegelan, GCC Secretary-General, also participated in the meeting.

The Ministerial Council considered the dangerous and delicate situation in the Arabian Gulf region created by the military exercises being conducted by the naval and air forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the territorial waters of the United Arab Emirates between the Strait of Hormuz and the occupied island of Abu Musa, which belongs to the United Arab Emirates. These exercises, which began on 27 February 1999, are being carried out in flagrant violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates, and they pose a serious threat to security and stability in the region and are endangering intraregional and international shipping in the Arabian Gulf.

The Ministerial Council recalls the decision of the GCC Supreme Council at its nineteenth session, held in Abu Dhabi in December 1998, affirming that the GCC member States reject the continued occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, and further affirming the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over those islands as an integral part of the State.

The Ministerial Council condemns the provocative Iranian military exercises being conducted on the three occupied islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and in its territorial waters. It urges Iran to desist forthwith from acts of provocation that pose a threat to security and stability in the Arabian Gulf, represent a source of deep concern and do nothing to promote confidence-building, since they are in violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates and constitute an attempt on the part of Iran to perpetuate its occupation of the islands.

The Ministerial Council conveys its outright rejection of Iran's continued occupation of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and, reaffirming the full sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the islands, it renews its call to the Iranian Government to end the occupation.

The Ministerial Council notes the firm desire of the United Arab Emirates, the GCC member States and the Arab States for rapprochement, for the elimination of obstacles to better relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and for genuine initiatives to bring about good relations based on the principles of good-neighbourliness, mutual respect, regard for common interests, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, the renunciation of the threat or use of force and the settlement of disputes through dialogue and other peaceful means. Iran has, however, met such initiatives with stepped-up measures to perpetuate the occupation and with further flagrant violation of the territorial sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates. It has gone so far as to transform the three islands into military zones and repeatedly to hold military exercises by its naval and air forces in the territorial waters of the United Arab Emirates, and this represents a source of deep concern for the GCC member States and betrays a contradiction between Iranian words and Iranian deeds.

The Ministerial Council renews its affirmation that it is important for the Islamic Republic of Iran to translate its declared desire, under President Mohammad Khatami, to improve its relations with the GCC member States into practical and concrete measures, in both word and deed. It should do this by responding candidly to the earnest and sincere calls issued by His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, by the GCC member States, by the Damascus Declaration countries, by the League of Arab States, by regional and international organizations and by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for a peaceful settlement to the dispute over the three islands, in accordance with the relevant conventions and covenants and the norms of international law, to be reached through direct negotiations or by referral to the International Court of Justice as the instrument for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. This is the way to build confidence and strengthen security and stability in the region.

The Ministerial Council affirms that the strengthening and diversification of cooperation between the GCC member States and the Islamic Republic of Iran requires that Iran should endeavour to build confidence and to resolve existing problems between the two sides on the basis of the principles endorsed by the GCC Supreme Council with regard to relations between the GCC member States and Iran and in accordance with established international norms and international custom.

The Ministerial Council decides to request the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, as Chairman of its current session, and the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council to approach sympathetic Arab and non-Arab States as well as regional and international groupings and organizations with a view to calling attention to the dangerous situation created in the region by Iran's armaments programmes, and particularly its missile programmes and programmes for weapons of mass destruction, given that these programmes exceed Iran's legitimate defence needs, represent a source of deep concern for the GCC member States and pose a threat to regional security and stability in the Arabian Gulf.

The Secretary-General will submit to the Ministerial Council at its next session a comprehensive report on Iranian violations and on the military exercises.

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FIFTH REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On the basis of my reports dated 16 December 1998 (S/1998/1176) and 7 January 1999 (S/1999/20), the Security Council, on 12 January 1999, adopted resolution 1220 (1999). By paragraph 3 of that resolution, the Security Council requested me to keep the Council closely informed on the situation in Sierra Leone and to submit a further report, by 5 March 1999, with recommendations on the future deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and the implementation of its mandate. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

II. MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

Rebel attack on Freetown and its aftermath

2. As described in my report of 7 January 1999 (see S/1999/20, para. 10), rebel fighters belonging to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked Freetown on 6 January 1999. The rebels attacked the city from the east and penetrated as far as the centre, which they held for four days before being forced to withdraw by a counterattack. The fighting resulted in the deaths of between 3,000 and 5,000 persons, including rebel fighters, soldiers of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), members of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) militia who were defending the capital and large numbers of civilian inhabitants. Many civilians were severely mutilated by the rebels. Up to 150,000 people were displaced in and around Freetown, and the rebels burnt down large numbers of public buildings and homes. A fuller description of the atrocities is contained in section IV below.

3. After fierce fighting, ECOMOG forces located in the western part of Freetown, reinforced from the main ECOMOG base at Lungi, managed to expel the rebels and regain control of the city. However, several thousand rebels are thought to remain in the Peninsula Mountains surrounding Freetown, despite ECOMOG and CDF efforts to dislodge them. It is also believed that unknown numbers of rebels might have infiltrated the city and remain there ready to

launch further attacks. Consequently, the security situation in Freetown, despite recent improvements, should still be considered volatile. On 24 February, ECOMOG succeeded in expelling the rebels from Waterloo, although they remain in a position to cut the main road from Freetown to Bo and Kenema.

4. The rebels are now thought to control much of the north of the country, though ECOMOG has, with varying success, contested rebel control around Lunsar, Port Loko and Kambia, and retains possession of Kabala and Bumbuna. In the south, ECOMOG has repulsed several rebel attacks on Kenema. Around Bo, the second largest city in Sierra Leone, the situation remains calm but tense. Rebel forces reportedly rely on some foreign mercenaries, including Europeans and Liberians, and are reported to be receiving weapons from outside the country.

5. During the crisis, which began in mid-December, ECOMOG received several thousand reinforcements from Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea and Mali. However, some doubt has been cast over the longer-term future of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone in the light of statements made by candidates in the Nigerian elections. The contribution of Nigeria to ECOMOG has been so central that ECOMOG's military viability could be threatened if that contribution were reduced. Though efforts to create a Sierra Leonean army deserve further support, the army is unlikely to be able to bear the burden alone, at least for the foreseeable future.

6. UNOMSIL evacuated all its international personnel, many of its vehicles and much of its equipment immediately prior to the 6 January attack, as did other United Nations agencies, Governments and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represented in Sierra Leone. The relocation was followed by a substantial reduction in the number of staff, in particular military and civilian police. The remaining staff will stay in Conakry until the security situation is considered acceptable. My Special Representative, Francis G. Okelo, and members of his civilian and military staff, including the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash Joshi (India), have paid brief visits to Freetown to study the situation first-hand and to maintain contacts with the Government of Sierra Leone and with ECOMOG, as well as with civil society. On 3 March, following improvements in the security situation, it was decided to permit the return of a limited number of United Nations personnel as soon as possible. The security situation will continue to be kept under close review.

Disarmament and demobilization

7. Following the rebel offensive in December and January, ex-soldiers in the disarmament and demobilization camp at Lungi were relocated by the Government in Freetown. The majority of them appear to have either joined the rebels or disappeared, while some lost their lives during the rebel attack on Freetown. On 4 February 1999, the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration held an emergency meeting to examine the situation regarding ex-combatants. During the meeting, the Vice-President stated that there was no change in the Government's policy on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. As of February 1999, approximately 1,000 of the 3,000 ex-combatants originally at the Lungi Demobilization Centre had reported to ECOMOG and now are temporarily located within Freetown. At the meeting it was

decided that these ex-combatants should be accommodated and cared for separately. It welcomed the offer by the Department for International Development of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to provide food and medical treatment for ex-combatants in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and to assist in measures to improve the camp security. The Department for International Development has also been providing food, at Lungi Garrison, for 600 dependants of ex-combatants in the programme. The meeting also agreed that ex-combatants would be relocated to Lungi following an overall improvement in the security situation.

8. It may be noted that the two remaining UNOMSIL medical doctors have provided medical assistance to some of the ex-soldiers in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. This humanitarian gesture has been appreciated by the Government, ECOMOG, ex-soldiers in the programme and the public.

Civilian police

9. As described in my earlier reports, prior to the rebel attack on Freetown, UNOMSIL civilian police had undertaken a wide range of activities to promote the reconstitution of the police force in Sierra Leone. During the rebel attack on Freetown, more than 200 policemen and members of their families were killed, and police equipment and infrastructure were destroyed, including the Criminal Investigation Department headquarters and all its files, records and documentation. The Pademba Road prison was also broken into and all of the prisoners escaped, a situation which poses a serious security threat. This has significantly impaired the Government's efforts to maintain law and order in the city. As a result, the Government's plans to reorganize the police force will require substantial external assistance.

III. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Activities of the Government of Sierra Leone

10. The Government of Sierra Leone has continued to refine its policy with regard to negotiations with the rebels, and to take initiatives accordingly. On 7 January 1999, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah met with Corporal Foday Sankoh, the leader of RUF, in an effort to arrange a ceasefire. On 16 January, the President issued a statement reiterating his readiness to pursue political dialogue and repeating his offer of amnesty to the rebels.

11. On 7 February 1999, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah delivered a radio broadcast in which he again indicated his readiness to engage in a dialogue with the rebel leaders, and to allow Foday Sankoh to meet other RUF leaders, provided that RUF accepted the legitimacy of the Government. The President stated that the Abidjan Peace Agreement of November 1996 (S/1996/1034) could be used as a frame of reference for such a dialogue.

12. On 21 February, President Kabbah addressed the people of Sierra Leone in a nationwide radio broadcast in which he called on the Security Council,

especially its permanent members, to exert pressure on those States and individuals who continue to supply the weapons and logistics which are being used to kill Sierra Leoneans. President Kabbah stated that it was no longer enough for the Council to condemn the activities of the rebels, but to consider the possibility of taking further action, not excluding the threat of force, against the rebels in order to give effect to the Council's previous demands that the rebels cease all violence and seek genuine dialogue for the restoration of lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone. President Kabbah also reasserted his Government's determination to defend the territory of Sierra Leone. President Kabbah's address has been circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/1999/186).

13. On 25 February, the Minister of Information, Communications, Tourism and Culture reaffirmed the Government's commitment to dialogue with the rebels, stressing the crucial importance of seeking the views and suggestions of the civil society and expressing the Government's readiness to review the Abidjan Peace Agreement in the light of the prevailing situation.

14. On 28 February, President Kabbah again addressed the nation in a radio broadcast in which he agreed that Foday Sankoh and RUF members could hold their internal consultations in Lomé or Bamako. He stressed that, following these consultations, the RUF leader should be returned to Freetown to resume his appeal against his conviction for treason and related offences (see S/1998/1176, para. 4). The President also called for the immediate release of all civilians being held in detention by the rebels, including children and women whom they had abducted during the recent attack on Freetown.

Activities of the United Nations

15. In the aftermath of the rebel attack, my Special Representative, in close consultation with the Governments of Sierra Leone and of a number of countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), initiated or participated in a series of diplomatic efforts aimed at strengthening ECOMOG while opening up dialogue with the rebels. Following the initial involvement of the Government of Togo, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, my Special Representative visited Abuja, Lomé and Accra towards the end of January in order to help coordinate the ECOWAS response to the crisis.

16. These diplomatic activities culminated in the meeting, in Conakry, on 29 January, of the Heads of State of the three troop-contributing countries of ECOMOG: Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria. At that meeting, President Rawlings, President Conte and President Abubakar agreed on the need to convene an ECOWAS summit meeting on Sierra Leone, to be followed by a visit by representatives of the ECOWAS Committee of Six on Sierra Leone to New York to brief the Security Council. The Committee of Six on Sierra Leone comprises those three countries, as well as Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. The three Heads of State also instructed their Ministers for Foreign Affairs to develop a strategy for pursuing the dual-track approach outlined in paragraph 15 above.

17. Following a visit to Freetown, from 13 to 16 February, for consultations with the Government, my Special Representative met with representatives of RUF

in Abidjan on 21 February to ascertain the RUF commitment to the dialogue and the peace process and to discuss how best to expedite the internal RUF consultations pursuant to President Kabbah's offer of a dialogue. These discussions also dealt with a number of issues, including the venue, format and duration of the internal RUF consultations; a ceasefire; respect for human rights; and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The outcome of these preliminary discussions is now being reviewed by the Government of Sierra Leone and other members of ECOWAS. Should agreement be reached on a venue for talks outside Sierra Leone, it would be necessary to temporarily lift the ban on the travel of RUF leaders imposed by Security Council resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997.

Relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia

18. In response to repeated allegations that the Government of Liberia was supporting the Sierra Leonean rebels (see S/1999/20, paras. 14 and 15), the Liberian Government issued a statement, circulated as document S/1999/193, on the conflict in Sierra Leone. In the statement, the Government reaffirmed its recognition of the Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone, and stated further that it had not and would not support, nor be a party to, any attempt to destabilize the Republic of Sierra Leone or any other country.

19. The Government of Liberia also announced in its statement that it had launched an effort to repatriate and offer amnesty to Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone and, as a matter of urgency, requested the United Nations to assist the Governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia in identifying, documenting and processing Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone for an organized repatriation. The Government of Liberia also renewed its request to the Security Council to approve the deployment of United Nations monitors along with ECOMOG forces at the Liberia/Sierra Leone border in the light of repeated allegations of illegal shipments of arms to the rebels.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS

20. In late January and early February, UNOMSIL human rights officers visited Freetown to conduct an assessment of the situation there. The assessment team travelled extensively within the city and interviewed numerous people, including victims of mutilations and other human rights violations. Members of the team witnessed violations during their visit. UNOMSIL human rights officers have also continued to monitor the situation in the rest of the country and have undertaken a range of technical assistance activities.

21. The team found that the ultimate responsibility for the fighting, for most of the civilian casualties and for the related humanitarian emergency in Freetown rested with the rebel forces. Though it was impossible to state with precision the actual number of civilian casualties, most estimates put the total casualty figure at between 3,000 and 5,000, including rebel fighters and ECOMOG and CDF combatants. It is feared that at least 2,000 of those casualties were civilian inhabitants of Freetown. Many civilians were killed while being used by the rebels as human shields in combat, or because they reportedly refused to

come out into the streets to demonstrate in favour of the rebels. Many were killed while trying to protect family members from death or rape, or while trying to protect their property from looting and destruction.

22. Much of the killing seems to have been arbitrary and to have been carried out by child fighters or rebel fighters under the influence of drugs or alcohol. However, there is also evidence that some of the murders were targeted, including, reportedly, the murder of 200 police personnel. The Solicitor General was killed during the fighting, as were the Resident Minister for the North, an adviser to President Kabbah and at least two journalists. Other victims who appear to have been deliberately targeted include senior officials of the Sierra Leonean National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the Council of Churches and the National Commission for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reintegration, as well as Nigerian nationals.

23. According to medical sources interviewed by the human rights assessment team, many hundreds of civilians were treated for the amputation of limbs or other forms of mutilation, including some 70 at Connaught Hospital alone. It is feared that hundreds of other victims of mutilation did not survive to seek treatment. Victims of amputation and mutilation included men, women and children, some as young as six years old. The mutilations were usually inflicted with machetes or axes. During February, there was a sharp drop in reported incidents of mutilation by rebel elements in areas where they are located.

24. There have been reports of widespread rape and other forms of sexual abuse by rebel elements in Freetown and Makeni. In Freetown, eyewitnesses reported incidents of violent group rape of young women and girls rounded up by the rebels for that heinous purpose. Many rape victims were reported to have been subsequently abducted, mutilated or killed.

25. A significant number of the rebel combatants were children. Reports were received of death and injuries being inflicted by boys as young as eight to 11 years old.

26. The rebels abducted a large but unverifiable number of people in Freetown and other places they attacked. By mid-February, child care agencies reported that some 2,000 children had gone missing in Freetown alone since 6 January. Agency staff said they had witnessed the abduction by rebels of some 300 of these children. Escapees reported that abducted boys were selected for training as fighters, or used as porters. Women and girls were taken for sexual purposes or to cook food. A small number of prominent Sierra Leonean personalities and foreigners were also abducted, including the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freetown. Foreign abductees included several Indian workers, Roman Catholic nuns of Indian and Kenyan nationality and one Spanish and one French journalist. Though some managed to escape, at least eight abductees were killed and two seriously injured. Rebels continue to hold Roman Catholic Mission personnel abducted at Makeni and Kambia.

27. Rebel forces were also responsible for the deliberate widespread destruction of civilian property and public utilities in Freetown and other locations, such as Makeni and Kambia. In the centre of Freetown, about

20 per cent of the housing stock was destroyed, with as much as 90 per cent destroyed in the eastern outskirts of the city. Some public facilities appear to have been deliberately demolished, including police stations, the Pademba Road prison, the Nigerian High Commission and UNOMSIL headquarters. The residences of human rights activists, lawyers, journalists and Government officials were also targeted, as well as churches, mosques and hospitals.

28. Eyewitnesses interviewed by the assessment team also reported summary executions of alleged rebels or rebel sympathizers by ECOMOG soldiers. Persistent reports were received of executions in various parts of Freetown, sometimes carried out after a cursory interrogation. One alleged victim of summary execution was an eight-year-old boy caught in possession of a pistol. Members of the assessment team witnessed an execution at Connaught Hospital on 3 February by men in ECOMOG uniforms. Members of CDF are also accused of mistreating civilians during the crisis in Freetown. ECOMOG jets attacking Freetown during the fighting are also reported to have caused civilian casualties. ECOMOG soldiers also detained and physically mistreated national staff members of a number of humanitarian NGOs and the International Committee of the Red Cross, apparently accusing them, without evidence, of being rebel collaborators. ECOMOG High Command has subsequently indicated to my Special Representative their intention to investigate these allegations and to take corrective action as necessary.

29. UNOMSIL continues to provide technical assistance to the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights and the National Forum for Human Rights to assist them in carrying out their human rights monitoring, reporting and advocacy activities within Sierra Leone. It also works closely with the humanitarian community to ensure that they integrate issues of human rights into their current activities.

30. Facilitated by UNOMSIL, a Human Rights Committee for Sierra Leone has been temporarily established in Conakry, comprising the Sierra Leonean National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the National Forum for Human Rights, United Nations agencies, humanitarian organizations and UNOMSIL. The Committee is facilitating the active participation of the human rights community in the process of peace-building in Sierra Leone. In the coming weeks, if possible, significant activities of the Committee will be re-located to Freetown.

V. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

31. Since my previous report, the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone has drastically deteriorated, following the latest round of fighting, which culminated in the rebel attack on Freetown on 6 January 1999. The number of refugees in neighbouring countries has increased to an estimated 450,000, with an estimated 700,000 internally displaced persons. With ECOMOG expanding its hold on the capital, the number of known vulnerable displaced persons in Freetown is now estimated at 200,000, out of which some 60,000 have sought refuge in the national stadium. Many more are living in abandoned churches and schools.

32. Following a recent eight-day tour of the region that included Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, has called for more support for repatriation programmes in the region. She also discussed plans with Guinean authorities to move 50,000 Sierra Leonean refugees away from the Guinean border to prevent the camps from becoming rear bases for the rebels. The European Union and the United States of America have promised 4 million dollars to aid this operation. The estimated number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea today stands at 350,000.

33. UNOMSIL has facilitated the delivery of humanitarian aid by making its helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft available, to the extent possible, to United Nations agencies and international NGOs.

34. Outside Freetown, OXFAM has identified 30,000 displaced persons living in the Lungi peninsula. Further up country, approximately 50,000 internally displaced persons, who were reported to have fled Kenema during heavy fighting between the rebel forces and ECOMOG in early February 1999, appear to be returning to the area. While there are no reliable reports from further inland because of the insecure situation, thousands more are believed to have fled into the bush.

35. The suffering of vulnerable civilian populations is exacerbated by increasing levels of malnutrition, especially among children under five years of age. Preliminary surveys show that in some areas, as many as 25 per cent of the children are suffering from acute malnutrition. Furthermore, appalling sanitation conditions are rampant and health care is inadequate. Diarrhoeal diseases are on the rise in almost all the accessible areas. In addition, the disruption of routine vaccination activities has increased the risk of epidemics. The town of Kailahun is believed to be the origin of the more than 400 measles cases now being identified among displaced persons in Kenema. While a vaccination campaign has begun in Kenema, with 10,000 doses of antigen provided by UNICEF, many children are out of reach of the humanitarian community. Meanwhile, doctors and nurses at Connaught Hospital and elsewhere are struggling to treat about 500 victims of amputation and mutilation requiring extreme surgery. Lastly, approximately 1,750 children have been reported missing by their families. Very few have been reunited, while many are believed to be trapped in inaccessible areas.

36. The humanitarian community's ability to provide relief to these populations continues to be impaired by the ongoing hostilities and resultant insecurity. Following the widespread looting and destruction of humanitarian offices, warehouses, vehicles and relief supplies, humanitarian activities remain drastically reduced. Approximately two thirds of the country, roughly all of the territory north of Port Loko, Bo and Kenema, remains inaccessible by road. This has confined humanitarian interventions to the peninsula and the southern and western provinces, leaving thousands of Sierra Leoneans without basic assistance. The provision of humanitarian assistance to the needy is today being carried out, at great cost, by air. Meanwhile, the World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that if the roads to Freetown are not opened soon, allowing the free flow of commercial imports and food from upcountry, food shortages in the city could become more acute within one to three weeks.

37. Despite these constraints, the international humanitarian community has continued operations in accessible areas, particularly in the south where programmes continue in Bo, Kenema, Pujehun and Moyamba. From Conakry, international humanitarian staff continue to make day trips into the capital while national staff maintain a permanent presence in the city, where they work in collaboration with their governmental humanitarian counterparts. The humanitarian community's capacity to carry relief supplies and personnel to accessible areas of the country has been improved by the leasing of a helicopter for that purpose by the European Community Humanitarian Office and the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (ECHO/OFDA).

38. In order to streamline operations, a 60-day humanitarian plan of action is being finalized by the international humanitarian community in consultation with the Government. The plan is based on five basic operational requirements. These include: full access by all humanitarian organizations to communications equipment; cooperation between the Government and humanitarian agencies; unhindered access for humanitarian assistance; effective coordination with military and security forces; and the establishment of a forward logistics base at Lungi Airport. Because the plan uses existing assets, considerable progress has already been achieved. Approximately 140,000 metric tons of food has been distributed to vulnerable groups in Freetown with an additional 100,000 reaching accessible upcountry populations. A total of 21 clinics and four hospitals in Freetown are fully operational with support from United Nations agencies and partners, and more than 1,300 rolls of plastic sheeting and 40,000 blankets are now available in Freetown for distribution.

39. The humanitarian community is committed to continuing its work of providing assistance in spite of insecurity and the difficult working environment. Relief workers and the civilian population need your support in continuously calling on all parties to the conflict to re-commit themselves to respecting international humanitarian law by: recognizing the neutrality and impartiality of all humanitarian organizations; fully guaranteeing the absolute safety and security of humanitarian personnel, including relief items and equipment; and calling upon the Government of Sierra Leone to confirm its willingness to permit the unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance to all parts of the country.

VI. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

40. The General Assembly, by its resolution 53/29 of 20 November 1998, appropriated an amount of $22 million for the establishment and operation of the Observer Mission for the period ending 30 June 1999. The resources provided by the Assembly covered the Observer Mission's start-up costs as well as its maintenance at the full strength authorized by Security Council resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998.

41. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMSIL, as recommended in paragraph 51 below, the cost of maintaining the Observer Mission during the extension period will be well within the resources already provided by the General Assembly.

42. As at 15 February 1999, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMSIL special account amounted to $12.5 million. As at the same date, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1,666.6 million.

43. With regard to the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts in Sierra Leone, contributions received as at 28 February 1999 amounted to some $2.1 million, with authorized expenditure amounting to some $0.1 million.

VII. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

44. Sierra Leone continues to face an extremely complex and difficult situation fraught with serious risks. Though ECOMOG has succeeded in driving the rebels from Freetown and restoring order in its immediate vicinity, the capital is still threatened by rebel forces in the peninsula.

45. I unreservedly strongly condemn the merciless murders, inhuman mutilations and other appalling human rights violations perpetrated by the rebels on the innocent civilian inhabitants of Freetown, and the widespread property damage they have inflicted. In the light of some allegations that members of pro-Government forces may also have been guilty of violations, I hope that the Government will fulfil its assurances that such allegations will be investigated and welcome its assurances that these forces will adhere to international human rights standards in the future.

46. Concern over violations of human rights and the prevention of further violations stand at the heart of the Sierra Leonean conflict. For that reason, and in view of the scale and enormity of the violations inflicted recently in Freetown, I intend to deploy an additional human rights officer to UNOMSIL. This will enable the human rights component to expand its reporting and deepen its coverage of human rights abuses in Sierra Leone, as well as to maintain its technical cooperation activities with Sierra Leonean human rights organizations.

47. ECOMOG is to be congratulated on its success in repelling the rebels from Freetown and restoring a measure of order to the city. I also commend the Government of Mali for providing additional troops to ECOMOG and donor Governments, in particular the Netherlands, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, for the logistical support they have provided and continue to provide to ECOMOG.

48. In the meantime, I would urge the international community to continue to support ECOMOG logistically and to consider the provision of prompt bilateral assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone in the creation of a new Sierra Leonean army to defend the country. The Governments of Nigeria and the United Kingdom have taken the first steps in this regard.

49. The possible partial withdrawal of Nigerian forces from ECOMOG following the elections in that country and the consequent effects on ECOMOG's military effectiveness in Sierra Leone could require a major reappraisal of the situation. In particular, the dual track approach pursued so far, which

combines support for ECOMOG military action to maintain law and order with a willingness to negotiate with the rebels, may need to be reviewed. The Security Council may wish to consider the implications of this important new potential development.

50. I intend to pursue further with President Taylor some of the suggestions contained in the statement of the Government of Liberia (S/1999/193). Since practical obstacles to the proposal to deploy United Nations monitors at the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia remain, as deployment of the ECOMOG forces required to protect them is unlikely, the steps taken by the Government to encourage the repatriation, disarmament and demobilization of Liberian fighters in Sierra Leone are welcome.

51. President Kabbah's decision to allow the leader of RUF, Corporal Foday Sankoh, to meet with rebel leaders in order to develop a coherent set of political demands, which would form the basis of subsequent negotiations with the Government, is a bold and valuable initiative. The United Nations will continue to facilitate the conduct of talks through the provision of its good offices as required.

52. The preliminary meeting my Special Representative held with representatives of RUF in Abidjan on 21 February may have helped lay the groundwork for further negotiations, which might be based on the Abidjan Peace Agreement signed in November 1996 by the Government and RUF. In order to proceed, RUF must recognize the legitimacy of the Government, agree to a ceasefire, renounce violence, especially attacks on civilians, and permit humanitarian access to the areas they control under conditions of adequate security.

53. As I indicated in my report of 7 January (S/1999/20, para. 37), UNOMSIL has been substantially scaled back since its relocation to Conakry and now comprises only a small core of essential civilian and military personnel under the leadership of my Special Representative (see annex). The recent decision of the Government to allow Foday Sankoh to meet with the RUF leaders in Lomé or Bamako opens prospects for the start of a dialogue which should be encouraged. Should negotiations between the Government and the rebels take a favourable turn, UNOMSIL should remain in a position where it is capable of rendering further assistance to the peace process. I therefore recommend the extension of UNOMSIL's mandate for a further period of three months, until 13 June 1999. Its mandate will continue to be to provide information to me, and through me to the Security Council, about the situation in Sierra Leone in its political, military, security, human rights and humanitarian aspects; to continue to liaise closely with the Government of Sierra Leone and with ECOWAS and ECOMOG; to explore, in close consultation with the Government, ways of pursuing dialogue with the rebels aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict; to advise me on further actions the United Nations could take in the event of developments in and around Sierra Leone; and to stand ready to take quick action, on the basis of such expansion as the Security Council may authorize, to assist the implementation of any peace agreement.

54. In view of the improvement in the security situation in and around Freetown achieved during the past few days, it is my intention to re-establish UNOMSIL in Freetown as soon as possible. At least initially, the re-establishment will

take place on a small scale and with strict attention to the security situation. I therefore intend to increase the current number of military observers from 8 to 14, and to redeploy the necessary staff to support the relocation to Freetown. In the meantime, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations programmes and agencies have also been authorized to re-establish a limited presence in Freetown.

55. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Francis G. Okelo, and his staff. My thanks also go to the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi and the military observers of UNOMSIL, including those who have been repatriated following the relocation to Conakry. The valuable contribution made by the five civilian police advisers, who have now been repatriated, also deserves recognition.

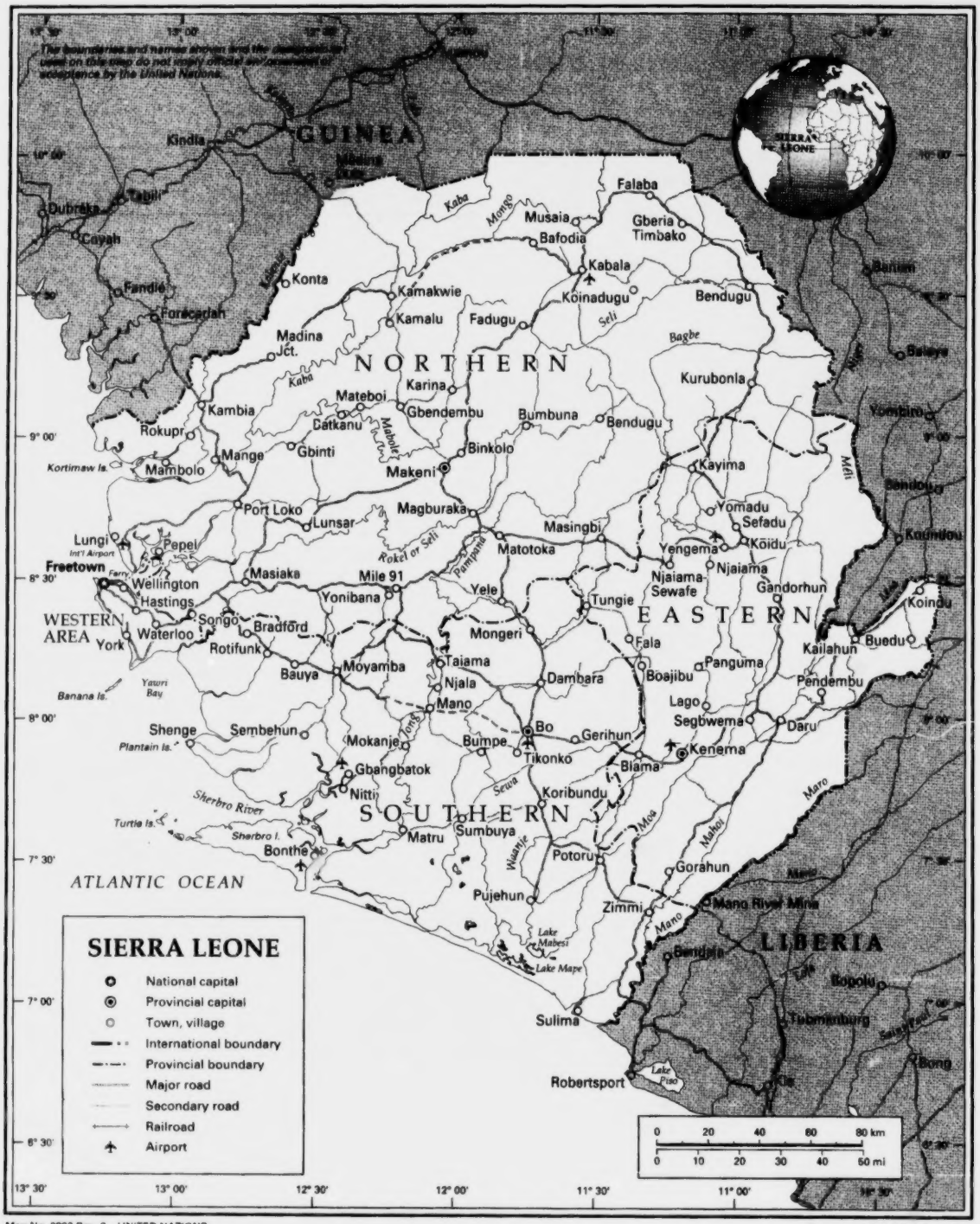
Annex

United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 1 March 1999

	Military observers	Others[a]	Total
China	–		–
Egypt	–		–
India	2	2	4
Kenya	1		1
Kyrgyzstan	1		1
New Zealand	–		–
Pakistan	1		1
Russian Federation	1		1
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1		1
Zambia	–		–
TOTAL	7[b]	2	9

[a] Medical team.

[b] Including the Chief Military Observer.



Map No. 3902 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS
January 1997

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UNITED
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General Assembly
Security Council

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A/53/855
S/1999/238
5 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda items 72, 76 and 93
REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH
SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 28 February 1999 from the representatives of Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the joint declaration of the Prime Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia concerning the bilateral relations between the two countries, which was adopted at Sofia on 22 February 1999 (see annex).

May we request your kind assistance in circulating the text of the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 72, 76 and 93 of its fifty-third session, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladimir SOTIROV
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Mission of
the Republic of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

(Signed) Naste CALOVSKI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Macedonia
to the United Nations

Annex

Joint declaration of the Prime Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia signed on 22 February 1999 at Sofia*

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia,

Proceeding from the common will to develop good-neighbourly relations between the two States,

Deeply convinced of the need to develop cooperation based on mutual respect, trust, understanding, good-neighbourliness and mutual respect for the interests of their countries and peoples,

Convinced of the need to strengthen security and peace, cooperation and confidence in south-eastern Europe,

Proceeding from the will of the two countries to integrate with the European and Euro-Atlantic structures,

Believing that constructive dialogue on all aspects of bilateral relations as well as on regional and international issues will contribute to the further development of relations between the two countries on the basis of equality,

Respecting the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the democratic principles promoted by the acts of the Council of Europe,

1. Declare their readiness and common will to develop comprehensive relations between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia. These relations shall be developed in compliance with the basic principles of international law.

2. The two countries shall cooperate within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Partnership for Peace Initiative, the multinational peace forces in south-eastern Europe and other international organizations and fora.

3. The two countries shall contribute to the development of cooperation between the States of south-eastern Europe, in strengthening mutual understanding, peace and stability in the region and in implementing regional projects aimed at the creation of a united Europe.

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* Title as submitted by the representatives of Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

4. The two countries shall maintain contacts and shall hold meetings between representatives of State institutions at different levels for the development of friendly relations and cooperation. They shall promote contacts between non-governmental organizations and the citizens of the two countries.

5. Given their geographical proximity, the two countries shall aim at creating the necessary legal, economic, financial and trade conditions to ensure free movement of goods, services and capital. They shall encourage mutual investments and shall ensure their protection.

6. The two countries shall promote tourist exchanges, as well as the development of relevant forms of cooperation in the tourism sector.

7. The two countries shall expand and improve the transport links and communications between them, including those within the framework of regional infrastructure projects. They shall aim at simplifying customs and border formalities for the movement of passengers and goods between the two countries.

8. The two countries shall encourage active and unhindered cooperation in the spheres of culture, education, health, social care and sports.

9. The two countries shall promote the free distribution of information by encouraging and developing cooperation with respect to press, radio and television programmes through modern information technologies. They shall undertake to protect the copyright and intellectual rights of authors from both countries..

10. The two countries shall expand their cooperation with respect to legal and consular affairs, and especially on civil, penal and administrative issues, with the goal of simplifying the conditions for travels and visits by citizens of both countries, as well as of resolving their humanitarian and social problems.

11. The two countries shall not undertake, incite or support unfriendly activities against each other. Neither countries shall allow its territory to be used against the other country by organizations and groups whose goal is to carry out subversive, separatist or other activities which threaten peace and security of the other country. The two countries do not have territorial claims against each other and will not have such claims in the future.

The Republic of Macedonia declares that nothing in its constitution may or should be interpreted, now or ever, as a basis for interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria with the aim of protecting the status and the rights of persons who are not citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

The two countries shall undertake effective measures for the prevention of hostile propaganda by institutions and agencies and shall not permit activities of private entities which incite violence, hatred or other similar activities which could harm the relations between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia.

Done at Sofia on 22 February 1999 in two original copies, each one in the official language of both countries, the Bulgarian language, in accordance with the constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Macedonian language, in accordance with the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, each text being equally authentic.

For the Republic of Bulgaria
Ivan Kostov
Prime Minister

For the Republic of Macedonia
Ljubcho Georgievski
Prime Minister

UNITED
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Security Council

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S/1999/239
5 March 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, issued on 2 March 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dieter KASTRUP
Permanent Representative of Germany
to the United Nations

99-06198 (E) 050399 050399

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, issued on 2 March 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the fact that Eritrea has accepted the draft of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for a framework agreement by means of a letter which the Eritrean President sent to the United Nations Security Council on 27 February 1999. The Union considers the OAU proposal to be the only basis for a peaceful solution of the conflict. This position was emphasized by the European Union ministerial troika which visited Addis Ababa and Asmara on 19 and 20 February.

The European Union again urges both parties to immediately cease hostilities on all fronts and to refrain from any further use of violence.

Given the fact that Ethiopia had already accepted the OAU plan, the European Union considers that both parties now have the chance to settle their conflict through negotiations on the basis of that document, which has the support of the European Union and the United Nations Security Council. It calls upon Ethiopia and Eritrea to fully implement the OAU framework agreement without any further delay.

The European Union reiterates its willingness to assist OAU in the implementation of a negotiated settlement of the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict.

The Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the countries members of the European Free Trade Association of the European Economic Area align themselves with the present statement.

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

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S/1999/240
4 March 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to inform you that on 2 January 1999, two Israeli helicopters hovered for three minutes in the wake of the Libyan vessel Qaryunis that was making for Beirut. The incident took place at coordinates 33 52 N and 34 20 E, 60 miles west of Beirut. This act represents a further violation by Israel of all the precepts and norms of international law relating to the freedom of shipping in the region. It reflects the hostility and deep-rooted malice of that entity.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya rejects this act of piracy and stresses the need for the United Nations to play its part in maintaining international peace and security by putting a halt to such unwise behaviour, which is in contravention of the principles and norms of international law. At the same time, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya retains its right to defend its sovereignty and interests in accordance with international conventions and the Charter of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abuzed Omar DORDA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06187 (E) 050399 050399

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/241
5 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 5 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you the attached statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea today, 5 March 1999 (see annex). The statement embodies a reiteration of Eritrea's acceptance of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) framework agreement and Eritrea's preparedness for its implementation. This clarification was given to the OAU delegation that visited Asmara on 4 and 5 March 1999.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement issued on 5 March 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, Haile Weldensae, today held discussions with a delegation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), representing the high-level delegation mediating the Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict.

The Eritrean Minister for Foreign Affairs informed the delegation that Eritrea:

(a) Reaffirms its acceptance of the OAU framework agreement endorsed by the Central Organ. This acceptance was communicated to the current Chairman of OAU on 27 February 1999;

(b) Had always called for and is now committed to an immediate ceasefire and cessation of hostilities;

(c) Has already established a high-level body fully mandated to initiate and finalize the implementation of the provisions of the framework agreement.

The OAU delegation expressed its satisfaction with the clarification made by the Eritrean Minister for Foreign Affairs.

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

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S/1999/242
8 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 5 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 28 February 1999, the Chief Government Spokesman and Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services, Newstead L. Zimba, issued a press statement following some acts of terrorism which were carried out in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, where 14 bombs were planted and exploded at various locations by enemies of the peace which Zambia enjoys.

I now take the liberty to attach the press statement and request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Peter L. KASANDA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06291 (E) 080399

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Annex

Press statement issued by the Chief Government Spokesman and Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services of Zambia on 28 February 1999

Early this morning, at about 0100 hours, Zambia experienced the first in a series of bomb blasts. The blast was as a result of five bombs placed one on each leg of a Zesco pylon of the high-tension lines from Kafue to Lusaka City; the fifth bomb was placed 2 metres away from the pylon. The bombs were detonated simultaneously and blew up the pylon. The second blast occurred at about 0130 hours, from a bomb placed outside the wall fence of a block of flats at the junction of Bwinjimfumu and Great East roads.

At the same time, another bomb went off in the Mapepe area of Chilanga, which blew up the main water pipe from Kafue to Lusaka. At about 0907 hours, police bomb disposal experts detonated the second bomb, which had been placed near the bomb that had exploded at the Bwinjimfumu and Great East roads site.

The fourth explosion was at 1200 hours at the premises housing the Angolan Embassy. The bomb exploded in a room on the first floor of the Chancery building, resulting in the death of one Angolan security officer and the injury of another. Both security officers are Angolan nationals. This loss of life is most regrettable.

The fifth explosion occurred at 1600 hours and was as a result of a bomb placed in a culvert in the proximity of the north-end flyover bridge.

The last blast was a controlled explosion of four bombs that had been placed below a pylon next to the pylon blown up at 0100 hours in Lusaka East. There have therefore been 13 bombs known to have been planted and exploded, plus one at the Angolan Embassy. The bomb experts have confirmed that all 14 bombs are of the same type.

As a result of this obviously unstable security situation, the Government wishes to condemn in unequivocal terms these acts of terrorism aimed at destabilizing the peace the Zambian people have always cherished. Acts of terror will be met with the sternest action. We will leave no stone unturned in bringing to account the people behind these acts of terror, whether foreign or local. To this end, we have invited the Government of the United States of America to provide expert assistance in the investigations of these acts of terror. We will leave the door open to other countries of goodwill to send in experts to help our security agencies in these investigations.

Zambia has always been and will want to continue to be an island of peace. We have made sacrifices for the peace of the southern African region and Africa as a whole, and our role has always been that of bridge-builders. This is the role we cherish and this is the role we will continue to play.

Zambia is now faced with acts of aggression. It is the duty of every Zambian to defend our country, and the Government wishes to appeal to every

Zambian to remain extra-vigilant. I appeal to all of you to cooperate fully with the security forces that have been tasked not only with ensuring continued peace, but also with investigating and bringing to book the messengers of death who seek to spill the blood of innocent Zambians.

As from tonight, orders have been issued that will result in certain security precautions being implemented. The Zambian people are once again being called upon to cooperate with the security forces. Until further notice, Zambians are urged to stay, to the greatest extent possible, away from the streets during hours of darkness. This appeal is not intended to inconvenience you but to protect you. I want to warn the nation to prepare for any eventuality. Let me reassure you, however, that the Government will not let you down.

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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1999/243
8 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward, enclosed herewith, the statement of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of 6 March 1999 relative to the decision of the Arbitral Tribunal on Brcko (see annex).

I would be very grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

99-06321 (E) 080399

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Annex

Statement of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of 7 March 1999*

Regarding the decision of the Presiding Arbitrator of the Arbitral Tribunal, Roberts B. Owen, to declare the municipality of Brcko a district under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as a guarantor of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, points out that such a decision has no grounds in the agreement of the parties, as set forth in article 5 of annex 2 of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, nor in the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Not bringing into question the right of the Arbitral Tribunal to pass its decisions, the Federal Government considers that decisions may only refer to the subject of the dispute as set forth in the Dayton/Paris Agreement, which means - to the disputed part of inter-entity boundary line in the area of Brcko, and not to the status of "the Brcko opstina" (the Brcko municipality), which is not mentioned anywhere in the Agreement.

Through the decision of the Presiding Arbitrator the third entity is de facto created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, contrary to the explicit constitutional provision according to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is composed of two entities: Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Passing decisions by Mr. Owen outside the framework and mandate of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement in a way that changes the very constitutional structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, represents a flagrant violation of the Agreement and law in general.

This decision brings into question the compactness of the territory of Republika Srpska, which is its vital interest, enshrined in the very basis of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement. For the above-stated reasons, this solution may become the cause of long-term instability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region.

Having all this in mind, the Federal Government considers that there are serious reasons that call for the reconsideration of the decision of Roberts B. Owen, for ensuring unprejudiced deliberation and for bringing back the proceedings within the framework of the mandate established by the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement.

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* Title as submitted by the representative of Yugoslavia.

UNITED
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Security Council

Distr.
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S/1999/243*
30 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

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I would be very grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* Reissued for technical reasons.

99-08957 (E) 300399

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Annex

Statement of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of 6 March 1999

Regarding the decision of the Presiding Arbitrator of the Arbitral Tribunal, Roberts B. Owen, to declare the municipality of Brcko a district under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as a guarantor of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, points out that such a decision has no grounds in the agreement of the parties, as set forth in article 5 of annex 2 of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, nor in the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Not bringing into question the right of the Arbitral Tribunal to pass its decisions, the Federal Government considers that decisions may only refer to the subject of the dispute as set forth in the Dayton/Paris Agreement, which means - to the disputed part of inter-entity boundary line in the area of Brcko, and not to the status of "the Brcko opstina" (the Brcko municipality), which is not mentioned anywhere in the Agreement.

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This decision brings into question the compactness of the territory of Republika Srpska, which is its vital interest, enshrined in the very basis of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement. For the above-stated reasons, this solution may become the cause of long-term instability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region.

Having all this in mind, the Federal Government considers that there are serious reasons that call for the reconsideration of the decision of Roberts B. Owen, for ensuring unprejudiced deliberation and for bringing back the proceedings within the framework of the mandate established by the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement.

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/244
8 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement issued on 6 March 1999 by the President of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović, and the Vice-President of its Government, Dr. Ratko Marković, relative to their letter addressed to the members of the Contact Group (see annex).

I would be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIĆ
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

99-06303 (E) 080399

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Annex

Statement of the President of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia and the Vice-President of its Government*

On the basis of positions adopted at yesterday's meeting of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia to the talks on Kosovo and Metohija, the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović, and the head of our multinational delegation, the Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Prof. Dr. Ratko Marković, addressed their letters to the Foreign Ministers of the Contact Group member States.

The letters most seriously draw attention to the manipulations and campaign set in motion to have the representatives of the political parties of the Albanian separatist movement sign the non-existent "Agreement". This is a test that was not discussed or accepted in Rambouillet. Also, it was neither discussed nor approved by the Contact Group. Both our delegation and some of the Contact Group member States have dissociated themselves from it in writing. The letters resolutely reject attempts to impose the policy of fait accompli and demand that the Contact Group member States and the international community prevent any manipulation and create appropriate conditions for the resumption of talks without pressure, threats or blackmail. The Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are ready to make their full contribution to such talks, on the well-known principled basis; it is, inter alia, pointed out in the letters, which were jointly signed and addressed by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović and the head of our delegation, the Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Prof. Dr. Ratko Marković, to the Foreign Ministers of France, Italy, the Russian Federation, Germany, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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* Title as submitted by the representative of Yugoslavia.

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LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement issued on 6 March 1999 by the President of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović, and the Vice-President of its Government, Dr. Ratko Marković, relative to their letter addressed to the members of the Contact Group (see annex).

I would be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIĆ
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* Reissued for technical reasons.

99-08963 (E) 300399

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Annex

Statement of the President of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia and the Vice-President of its Government

On the basis of positions adopted at yesterday's meeting of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia to the talks on Kosovo and Metohija, the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović, and the head of our multinational delegation, the Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Prof. Dr. Ratko Marković, addressed their letters to the Foreign Ministers of the Contact Group member States.

The letters most seriously draw attention to the manipulations and campaign set in motion to have the representatives of the political parties of the Albanian separatist movement sign the non-existent "Agreement". This is a test that was not discussed or accepted in Rambouillet. Also, it was neither discussed nor approved by the Contact Group. Both our delegation and some of the Contact Group member States have dissociated themselves from it in writing. The letters resolutely reject attempts to impose the policy of fait accompli and demand that the Contact Group member States and the international community prevent any manipulation and create appropriate conditions for the resumption of talks without pressure, threats or blackmail. The Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are ready to make their full contribution to such talks, on the well-known principled basis; it is, inter alia, pointed out in the letters, which were jointly signed and addressed by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milan Milutinović and the head of our delegation, the Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Prof. Dr. Ratko Marković, to the Foreign Ministers of France, Italy, the Russian Federation, Germany, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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S/1999/245
8 March 1999

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LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward the statement issued by the Office of the President of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia on 5 March 1999 relative to the situation in the talks on the autonomy of its Province of Kosovo and Metohija.

I would be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

99-06370 (E) 090399

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Annex

Republic of Serbia
Office of the President
Belgrade, 5 March 1999

Statement

The delegation of the Government of the Republic of Serbia held a meeting on Friday, presided by Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ratko Marković to review the results of the talks that recently closed in Rambouillet, France, and to discuss the preparations for the 15 March resumption of the talks on the resolution of problems in Kosovo and Metohija.

The President of the Republic of Serbia, Milan Milutinović, also took part in the meeting of the delegation.

The delegation assessed that initial success towards a peaceful settlement of the Kosovo and Metohija issue had been achieved in Rambouillet, thanks to the fact that the delegation has called for a concrete implementation of 10 principles of the Contact Group, especially for an unambiguous respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and also for a full equality of all ethnic communities in determining a future concept for autonomy in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Rambouillet talks have been temporarily discontinued without any concrete results, since a lot still needs to be done. It is well known that a political agreement has not been adopted and is far from being signed soon. A series of key provisions has been put forth unilaterally and they considerably contravene the 10 principles of the Contact Group. Therefore, hard work on the political agreement is pending. Furthermore, there was a transparent and inappropriate attempt only a few hours before the talks were about to close to deliver the documents which had not even been discussed by the Contact Group. These documents are the so-called Annexes 2 and 7 (dealing with the police issues and troops).

The public abroad and especially at home are aware of this. Unfortunately, over the past few days, we have seen false reports about what has been done and achieved in Rambouillet. The United States of America, including some other Contact Group members is deliberately creating confusion, claiming that the talks are at a stage in which, in fact, they are not and also that the political agreement was practically adopted and only needs to be signed on 15 March, to be followed by a beginning of talks on its implementation. By "political agreement", they mean the entire text of the agreement, including chapters on police and troops, namely the text that has not been discussed at all.

In short, a great sham stage-managed by the United States is in the offing. Requests are being made for the signing of an agreement whose major part (over 56 pages) has not been discussed either within the Contact Group or in the talks. Moreover, what is even more cynical and fraudulent is the fact that the parties of the Albanian separatist and terrorist movement are requested to sign the agreement they had made themselves, namely to agree to the occupation of

Kosovo and Metohija by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Requests are also being made for an interim agreement, for the holding of a referendum after three years, for granting full equality to the ethnic Albanian community alone and not to all ethnic communities in Kosovo and Metohija, for accepting a quasi-state in the territory of Serbia and Yugoslavia. What it really means is tantamount to substituting one idea for another, completely different one. Ethnic Albanian separatist parties, terrorists and drug mafias, are asked to accept something they have been asking for over the past years in Kosovo and Metohija: independence with the assistance of their NATO allies. On the other hand, a theory has been advanced that if Serbia does not sign, it will be seen as a party opposing the political settlement.

In addition to this, the Serbian Government delegation bitterly pointed to gross forgeries of a part of the text of the political accord which had been agreed earlier. One of them is a section which has been agreed upon and written down with representatives of the international community, especially with United States envoy Ambassador Christopher Hill, when it was established that after three years, the signatories will examine the agreement with a view to promoting its implementation and reviewing the proposals of any signatory for additional measures whose adoption shall require the consent of all signatories.

A version presented on the last day of the Rambouillet talks referred to the same problem, but contained also a forged new stand that changed things essentially, saying that three years after the agreement takes effect, there will be an international conference to establish mechanisms for the final settlement for Kosovo, based on the will of the people, the opinion of relevant bodies, both sides' efforts towards the implementation of the agreement, the Helsinki Final Act; and there will also be a comprehensive assessment of the agreement and consideration of both sides' proposals for additional measures.

What we have been warning against and saying all along is now actually taking place, resulting in an unprecedented sham, fraught with forgeries. They have never wanted the agreement. The bottom line of this game of talks has been troops and troops alone. Pressure to deploy foreign troops reveals their true goals: an attempt to occupy a strategic part of Europe under a transparent pretext of "imposing peace", although it is common knowledge that there has never been, nor is there any "military confrontation". The entire scenario is aimed at creating artificial "conditions" at one point for proclaiming "independence" of part of the Serbian territory. There are attempts at making a good excuse for an aggression against a sovereign State. No excuse has ever been good enough for something like that.

Most importantly, we have been presented with totally unacceptable documents whose almost every other page directly or covertly contradicted the 10 Contact Group principles.

We have been requested to accept: (a) the President of Kosovo, the Constitution of Kosovo and Metohija and legislative powers of the Kosovo and Metohija Assembly (Parliament); (b) a special system of judiciary comprising the constitutional and supreme courts of Kosovo and Metohija; (c) harmonization with the agreement, namely, a change of the Serbian and Yugoslav Constitutions; (d) the need for obtaining Kosovo and Metohija's consent for changing the Kosovo

and Metohija borders and declaring a state of emergency; (e) the entire agreement as interim and the holding of another international conference after three years to consider the will of the people, i.e., a referendum, in only one part of the Serbian State. This was the height of cynicism on one part of the international community, which has said that it will never accept a referendum in Kosovo and Metohija or its "independence".

In short, it was a diktat that called for an international protectorate with a number of major requests, which the state delegation could not possibly accept.

Despite all this, the state delegation had until the last moment been submitting many amendments and very constructive proposals in line with the demands of the Contact Group for wide self-government of Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia, advocating full equality of all ethnic communities and, consequently, the multi-ethnic character of the province. The state delegation expected the international community to endorse this multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-confessional approach, as opposed to the nationalistic, even Nazi-like, approach of the ethnic Albanian separatist movement.

Unfortunately, owing to the obvious and open obstruction by some Contact Group members, our endeavour did not ultimately produce the desired effects, although the state delegation demonstrated great cooperativeness by demanding a minimum as regards the protection of the national interests, independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

This country has done only what any other sovereign country in the world would have done. It was to no avail, although the principles were on our side. Unfortunately, the force was on the other. Force was especially demonstrated through demands that an "international military presence", meaning foreign troops, be accepted even before a political settlement was reached, although the scope and character of international presence had been defined in the agreement concluded between Yugoslavia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). They wanted more: 28,000 foreign troops that should, allegedly, disarm the "Kosovo Liberation Army". This is absurd: such a big army for an alleged fight against terrorists. At the same time, demands were made for the withdrawal of a much smaller Serbian force from Kosovo and Metohija. These and other similar demands were designed to make state authorities take part in the continuing ethnic cleansing of the province of its Serb and other non-ethnic Albanian population, as the international community previously allowed to happen in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Now, the international community wanted to cleanse Serbia of Serbs. This the state delegation could not accept. Any democracy is tested by the degree of protection it provides to all citizens and all ethnic communities equally, but this fact was not heeded. The proposed documents provided for the Albanian national community to have the upper hand in all matters, while others were only to be "protected" minorities.

Taking all this into account, and the way the talks were being held, the state delegation strongly demanded that the Contact Group protect us from all pressures, especially military ones, which were tremendous in Rambouillet. Either troops or no agreement. As if everyone had forgotten that a political

settlement rules out the use of force, which is also prohibited by the Charter of the United Nations.

Unfortunately, some representatives of the international community in Rambouillet did not take this into account. It seemed this country was at fault for not wanting war but a just and peaceful political settlement.

This outcome of the Rambouillet meeting did not surprise the state delegation, but neither did it discourage its endeavour to achieve peace and a peaceful settlement based on international law and justice and international order. The state delegation is ready to resume talks in Paris, in Belgrade, in Pristina or anywhere where a political settlement can be reached. This is an absolute priority. Anywhere, any time, this delegation will work for a peaceful settlement, for wide self-government within Serbia and Yugoslavia, for equality of all ethnic communities. At the same time, this delegation will not give up Kosovo and Metohija, allow its secession or transformation into a third republic. If the state delegation were to agree to this, it would become a traitor to itself, to our citizens, to Serbs, Montenegrins, ethnic Albanians, Muslims, Romanies, ethnic Turks, Gorani, Egyptians, all who live in the province and wish to continue living there in peace and equality.

The public has been informed of the conclusions of the Co-Chairmen of the Rambouillet meeting. These conclusions only give a partial picture of the meeting. They cover up the failure of the organizers and especially the behaviour and positions of the delegation of the ethnic Albanian separatist movement. The camouflage did not work, as the ethnic Albanian delegation had written to the Co-Chairmen openly demanding the deployment of NATO troops and clearly explaining the purposes of a referendum and especially clearly indicating whom it considered to be the "people of Kosovo" that were to be allegedly consulted before signing an agreement.

Such an approach can hardly lead to a proper political agreement. However, the first stage of the talks has ended. Before the end of the talks, the state delegation clearly underlined in a letter to the Co-Chairmen - and they included it in their conclusions - that wide self-government for Kosovo and Metohija must also include the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The delegation also pointed out in its letter that there can be no independence for Kosovo and Metohija or its transformation into a third republic. This is why all elements of self-rule must be understood and clearly defined when the time comes for the agreement to be concluded. This should be adequately set out and resolved in future endeavours. The state delegation is ready to attend a future meeting on this issue.

We therefore rightly expect the international community and especially the Contact Group to see reason and create appropriate conditions for the resumption of the talks. Negotiations and peace are in any case, especially this one, better than unprecedented war which might engulf the entire region. With this conviction, Serbia and Yugoslavia expect that talks will be resumed free from bias of any kind, pressures or threats, and are ready to make their constructive contribution to this end.

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8 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 8 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 6 March 1999 addressed to you from Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06297 (E) 080399

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Annex

Letter dated 6 March 1999 from the Prime Minister of Ethiopia addressed to the President of the Security Council

I decided to write to you to convey to you, and through you to the Security Council, the sadness and the deeply felt frustration that I myself, and our entire people, have felt at the treatment of our country, a victim of aggression, has received from the Security Council over the past few months.

Let me, Mr. President, set the record straight from the outset. There is hardly anyone who can deny that aggression was committed against Ethiopia by Eritrea. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Framework Agreement, which was crafted after six months of intensive labour, was premised on the finding that Eritrea was the aggressor and Ethiopia the victim of aggression.

It was this same Framework Agreement that was endorsed by the Security Council as "fair and balanced" and the "the best hope" for peace. As such, at the minimum, the Council had implicitly recognized and tacitly accepted that Ethiopia was the victim of aggression.

While the facts were thus clear to the Security Council, it did not, as it had done previously in comparable instances, condemn the Eritrean aggression and it chose not ask Eritrea to withdraw from occupied Ethiopian territory. This double standard was palpably felt by us, but we continued to show full cooperation with the Security Council, inter alia, out of conviction that the role of the United Nations is critical for peace and stability, including in our subregion.

In the meantime, the Eritrean authorities were being emboldened to persist in their intransigence, including by the Security Council's lukewarm response to the challenge posed by the Eritrean aggression. We, for our part, continued for almost nine months to plead for the assistance of the Security Council and its members to ensure the withdrawal of the Eritrean occupying forces from our territory. Nine months of supplication on our part for salvation from a full-scale war were in vain. After this long period of Eritrean obstinacy, intransigence and provocation, intended to humiliate Ethiopia, we had no other alternative but to exercise our right of self-defence - a right provided for in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and sanctioned by international law.

It then became obvious to us that the Security Council was determined to prevent the victim of aggression from regaining its dignity as a nation. Thus, instead of putting, even belatedly, the required pressure on the aggressor, the Council opted for a course of action which essentially put both the aggressor and the victim of aggression on the same footing. More telling in this regard, and the instance which will always remain a stain on the history of the Council's involvement in this crisis, is what the Council wanted to do at its informal consultation on 24 February 1999. It was clear to Ethiopia that what was critical for the Security Council was not coming to the assistance of the victim but finding ways and means of appeasing the aggressor through concessions

that would have had the effect of undermining Ethiopia's administration in the occupied territories. Fortunately for Ethiopia, only two days after those serious consultations on how to reward the aggressor at the expense of the victim were conducted by the Council, Ethiopia, at great sacrifice, liberated the Badme area from Eritrean occupation. This turn of events also served to protect the OAU Framework Agreement, which was slated to be compromised to accommodate the wishes of the aggressor country in compliance with its insistence that might must create right.

Now, I wish to come to the convoluted letter written on 27 February 1999 by the President of Eritrea to your predecessor, in which Eritrea's acceptance of the OAU framework agreement was thrown in as an afterthought - a letter which was written as the Eritrean occupying forces were being driven out from a portion of Ethiopian territory they had occupied by force for nine months and from which the Eritrean President had said he would never ever withdraw, affirming that such withdrawal would be as unlikely as the sun failing to rise.

The Framework Agreement, which only six days previously the Eritrean President had told an European Union Troika was unsatisfactory, became, by some miracle, acceptable to Eritrea. Its author, OAU, which the Eritrean President told the Troika was a fickle organization, suddenly became credible in the eyes of the Eritrean authorities.

No wisdom is required, Mr. President, to realize that the Eritrean acceptance of the Framework Agreement is a tactical ploy which they decided to resort to after they saw what was coming, and a tactical move to buy time.

This, Mr. President, is corroborated by an abundance of evidence. Even as the Security Council was being informed about this sudden change of heart in Asmara, the Eritrean authorities were making it clear to their public that their alleged withdrawal was tactical, intended for the reorganization of their occupying forces for another offensive. This has continued to be repeated by various officials of Eritrea, including their Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Eritrean public has yet to be formally informed by its own Government that Eritrea has accepted the OAU Framework Agreement. What the Eritrean public knows about is the military preparations, which comes closer to the truth with regard to the Eritrean intentions than what the Security Council is told by the Eritrean President.

It is true that the Eritrean occupying forces have, with great sacrifice, been driven out of Badme. But large chunks of Ethiopian territory in the Zalambessa-Aiga, Bada-Bure and Egala regions still remain under Eritrean occupation. What the Eritrean intentions are in these occupied areas is made crystal clear by the frantic efforts being made to build and reinforce fortifications.

All this can hardly be surprising or unknown to the Security Council. It is therefore perplexing to us that the Security Council would allow itself to be railroaded into taking the Eritrean position at face value. In effect, what the Security Council has been persuaded to do is to give to the aggressor time for preparation so that we may go back to the conditions that helped frame the

discussion that took place at he Council's informal consultation on 24 February 1999.

The Security Council, Mr. President, is being misled by those who are influential and by those who, wittingly or unwittingly, have decided to make their policy on this crisis an appendage of the insincere and deceptive position of the Eritrean authorities. It is indeed tragic and an extreme form of injustice for the Council, which failed to utter a word in condemnation of an aggression committed against Ethiopia, now to want, with unprecedented enthusiasm, to stop Ethiopia from exercising its right of self-defence against an aggressor that has shown no inclination to respect international law and that has made it crystal clear that it is only might for which it has respect.

In this context, the regret expressed by the Security Council in its latest statement about Ethiopia's exercise of its right of self-defence is a reflection of this lack of balance in the stance that continues to be adopted by the Council on this crisis. In so doing, the Security Council, in particular those at whose behest the Council is being derailed from the path of justice, is repeating the infamous League of Nations policy of appeasement of the 1930s, which made Ethiopia a sacrificial lamb on the altar of the political and strategic calculations of the major Powers.

Despite all this and in spite of the disheartening experience we have had, as a victim of aggression, with the Security Council, I, for one, am still hopeful that justice and fairness will prevail in the deliberations of the Security Council on this and other similar issues. Accordingly, we look forward to the Security Council playing a constructive role for peace and stability in the Horn of Africa - a region which, in addition to the already existing intractable crises bedevilling the area, has been made to face a new phenomenon of militaristic adventure by Eritrea. Ethiopia needs, and the Horn of Africa requires, the Security Council to discharge its responsibilities without delay and without equivocation on the Eritrean aggression so that the clear message could be conveyed that, notwithstanding the Eritrean President's insistence to the contrary, might does not make right and that we live, not by the rules of the jungle, but by rules of civilized behaviour.

I, therefore, ask the Security Council and plead with it in the name of its own Charter principles:

1. To condemn the Eritrean aggression against Ethiopia;

2. To call on the Eritrean occupying forces to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from all remaining occupied Ethiopian territories;

3. To affirm what is clear and obvious, that Eritrea bears full responsibility for the loss of lives, for the humanitarian crisis and for the destruction of property caused by its aggression.

In conclusion, let me assure you, Mr. President, that while Ethiopia reserves its right of self-defence in conformity with what is provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law - rights which the Security Council cannot deny it - it will, on the other hand, continue its commitment to the OAU Framework Agreement and to continuing cooperation with OAU. As a law-abiding nation, Ethiopia has no other agenda in this crisis other than self-defence and the protection and the defence of its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

(Signed) Meles ZENAWI
Prime Minister of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

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8 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 8 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you a statement issued today, 8 March 1999, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-06309 (E) 080399

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Annex

Statement issued on 8 March 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea

Ethiopia continues to pursue its agenda of war

The Ethiopian regime continues to pursue its war of aggression against Eritrea, adamantly rejecting calls by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Security Council, the European Union (EU) and several countries, including the United States of America, the Russian Federation, France, China, Japan and Italy, for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

It may be recalled that, on 1 March, the OAU high-level delegation urged an immediate end to the fighting, given the acceptance by both parties of the Framework Agreement. Similarly, the United Nations Security Council issued two statements in the past week alone calling for an immediate ceasefire and expressing its regret, especially in its communication of 4 March, that Ethiopia still continues its military actions.

But Ethiopia stubbornly persists in its war of aggression, giving a deaf ear to all these calls. Pitched fighting continued throughout last week as Ethiopia launched, almost daily, attacks on the Mereb-Setit front in an attempt to seize Eritrean sovereign territory.

These acts of aggression have been accompanied by belligerent statements from Addis Ababa:

In a government statement of 1 March 1999, entitled "Ethiopia is looking for a lasting peace", the regime openly admits that its agenda extends to overthrowing the Government in Asmara, which has become a threat to the region.

Ethiopia's Parliament issued a vitriolic statement on 2 March rejecting United Nations Security Council resolution 1227 (1999) of 10 February 1999. Ethiopia objected strongly to the cessation of hostilities and the embargo on the sale of arms to both countries. Oddly enough, the extraordinary session of Parliament did not address the Security Council's statement of 27 February calling on both sides to halt hostilities now that the OAU Framework Agreement had been accepted by both parties (S/PRST/1999/9).

A senior government official told a public rally in Addis Ababa on 2 March that the war will continue until the Eritrean army is wiped out.

Ethiopia's speaker of Parliament, Dawit Yohannes, told a press conference in Paris on 3 March that his country is not contemplating a ceasefire at this stage.

As international pressure mounts on Ethiopia, urging it to agree to a ceasefire and not to entertain agendas of territorial aggrandizement or the subversion of a sovereign Government in contravention of international law,

Addis Ababa has come out with a new ploy. In an official statement that it issued on 5 March, Ethiopia is now arguing that it will continue the war until Eritrea withdraws from other occupied territories as required to do so by OAU.

This is a complete lie and a deliberate distortion of the OAU Framework Agreement. Indeed, there is no ambiguity in the OAU Framework concerning demilitarization throughout the border area. The OAU clarification on redeployment and demilitarization given to the Government of Eritrea further reads: the redeployment is of Eritrean troops from Badme town and its environs (defined as the areas surrounding the town). This should be immediately followed by the demilitarization of the entire border, through the redeployment of the forces of both parties along the entire border, to positions to be determined subsequently, as part of the implementation process of the Framework Agreement.

It must also be borne in mind that Ethiopia has always refused to submit the totality of its territorial claims, in spite of the illegal map that it published officially in October 1997 carving out large chunks of Eritrean territory. The Government of Eritrea has time and again requested OAU to demand that Ethiopia submit, in explicit geographic terms, the totality of its claims, as this was imperative for defining the scope of the border conflict. But Ethiopia has invariably rejected these demands. And, in the clarifications that Eritrea sought from OAU regarding this particular issue, the OAU's response reads: "Ethiopia had indicated that it will submit its claims when the issues of delimitation, demarcation and, if need be, arbitration are addressed."

Why is Ethiopia raising new issues now when it has refused to discuss its claims in the past eight months? Does Ethiopia want to revise the Framework Agreement which was endorsed by the summit of the Central Organ of OAU?

Ethiopia has violated operative paragraph 1 of the Framework Agreement on the cessation of hostilities and the relevant Security Council resolutions when it launched the war against Eritrea on 6 February 1999. Despite its pronouncements to the contrary in the early days, Ethiopia does not deny now that this was a well-planned offensive complete with a code name (Operation Sunset).

In the event, is Ethiopia now demanding a "reward" for an act of aggression that it has committed in contravention of OAU and Security Council resolutions? Is this the reason why it is requesting, albeit in a roundabout way, a new version of the OAU Framework Agreement?

Ethiopia goes further, accusing Eritrea of violating human rights and other norms of international law, in an effort to justify continued war. Here again, the track record illustrates the reverse:

It is Ethiopia that has expelled over 53,000 Eritreans and which has confiscated their life-long earnings;

Ethiopia has detained more than 1,500 Eritrean youth as prisoners of war in its concentration camps under the presumption that they are potential soldiers;

Ethiopia has employed about 200 mercenaries in its air force;

Ethiopia continues to target population centres in its air raids (25 civilians have been killed and over 30 wounded in recent air bombings of Deda Lalai, Badme, Adi Qwala, villages in the Zalambesa and Tsorona areas, and Shambuqo).

Ethiopia is not pursuing the war because it has legitimate border claims Ethiopia's agenda is territorial aggrandizement, which it hopes to achieve by installing a puppet government in Eritrea. But this ambition is not tenable in terms of international law. It is also impossible to achieve in practice. It was this ambition that in the past plunged the region into turmoil for 30 years. That sad history should not be repeated now and the onus for preventing a similar disaster lies with the international community.